

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL SUTTGART

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, AU

SUBJ: ESTABLISHMENT OF EAST-WEST TRADE CENTER CLUB IN VIENNA

1. A NUMBER OF LOCAL FIRMS AND EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE
RECENTLY RECEIVED LETTERS FROM JEANNIE PACKEL ANNOUNCING
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EAST-WEST TRADE CENTER CLUB IN VIENNA
AND SOLICITING MEMBERSHIP AT \$1000 PER FIRM. SINCE SIMILAR
LETTERS, AND REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE (INCLUDING LISTS
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OF AMERICAN FIRMS), HAVE GONE TO EMBASSIES IN OTHER

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, WE SUGGEST THAT ADDRESSEES BE GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS IN CONSIDERING REPLIES AND RESPONDING TO ANY INQUIRIES. THE OBSERVATIONS ARE BASED IN PART ON A VISIT TO THE CLUB'S FACILITIES AND CONVERSATION WITH CLUB MANAGER PACKEL.

2. ALTHOUGH THE LITERATURE DESCRIBES THE ORGANIZATION AS A "CENTRALIZED BRAIN TRUST OF EASTERN EUROPEAN TRADING AUTHORITIES", THE CLUB ACCORDING TO MRS. PACKEL, IS REGISTERED UNDER AUSTRIAN LAW AS A PRIVATE CLUB, NOT A BUSINESS FIRM. MRS. PACKEL SAYS IT HAS THE NUMBER OF OFFICERS REQUIRED BY LAW, BUT NO MEMBERS SO FAR. THE ONLY SPONSORING FIRM TO DATE IS THE WIENER TAPETENFABRIK (SEE BELOW, BUT MRS. PACKEL HOPES TO HAVE 3 AMERICAN AND 3 AUSTRIAN SPONSORS "SOON".

3. THE CLUB'S PREMISES ARE AMPLE BUT UNOCCUPIED, AND EVEN THE BAR WAS COVERED WITH DUST. THE ONLY SIGNS OF ACTIVITY WERE IN THE OFFICES OF MRS. PACKEL, AND IN AN ADJOINING OFFICE OCCUPIED BY MR. JOHN A JESSO. JESSO STARTED THE CLUB (ALTHOUGH HIS NAME DOES NOT APPEAR AT ALL, AND APPARENTLY USES THE PREMISES AS HEADQUARTERS FOR HIS LATEST BUSINESS ENDEAVOR, THE WIENER TAPETENFABRIK AND INDUSTRIE-BETEILIGUNGS AG.

4. COMMENT. THE CLUB HAS NO RELATIONSHIP TO THE DEFUNCT VIENNA EAST-WEST TRADE CENTER. ITS SPONSORS, HOWEVER, ARE TRYING TO CAPITALIZE ON THE CENTER' DEMISE TO THEIR OWN ENDS. WHEN WE POINTED OUT THAT THEIR LITERATURE CRIBBED HEAVILY FROM EARLIER EWTC BROCHURES, THIS WAS IN EFFECT ACKNOWLEDGED (NOTE: THEIR PRINTER HAD MADE THE SAME POINT).

5. BECAUSE OF THE CLUB'S VERY SHAKY CREDENTIALS, AND BECAUSE THE EMBASSY'S PAST EXPERIENCE WITH MR. JESSO AS A TRUSTWORTHY BUSINESSMAN HAS BEEN POORT, WE DO NOT INTEND TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE OR OTHERWISE LEND SUPPORT. WE ALSO ADVISE ADDRESSEES TO EXERCISE DUE CAUTION IN DEALING WITH THE CLUB.

6. WE ARE HOLDING THE REPLY (AND ENCLOSURES) TO MRS. PACKEL'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LETTER FROM THE US COMMERCIAL OFFICE IN MOSCOW, UNTIL OTHERWISE ADVISED. BUCHANAN

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